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Introduction by David Haglund

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Introduction by David Haglund, Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario)

In Canada, no less than in other countries and likely a great deal more than in most of them, national 'identity' remains a primordial consideration, not just for policy intellectuals but for policy makers as well. It is easy to see why there should be such a premium placed on ontological calculations, what with the country's having a relatively small population that lives cheek by jowl with a neighbour demographically ten times its size – a neighbour, moreover, with which it manifests a high degree of linguistic and cultural similarity, and with whom it has woven myriad strands of thick economic integration. Ever since the American Revolution, the U.S. has figured as that most significant of Canada's 'significant others' – the indispensable referent object for trying to determine exactly what it means to be Canadian. In a simple, and negative sense, what it means to be Canadian has historically taken the form of a definition *a contrario*, such that to be Canadian it has sufficed simply not to be American. But at times the 'objective correlatives' for Canadian identity bespeak a different, less reactive, ontological focus, where the national identity is embedded within a larger cognitive fabric; often, this larger framework has been one in which Canada's 'Britishness' gets highlighted – and indeed there are some these days who are prepared to argue that the Harper government's cultivation of British (and imperial) imagery testifies to a bid to distance Canada somewhat from its southern neighbour; in this respect, attention is focused upon the ongoing celebration of the bicentenary of the War of 1812, along with the 2011 decision to reinsert 'Royal' into the official names of the country's air force and its navy.¹

Occasionally, France itself becomes singled out as an alternative, or at least a supplementary, touchstone of the 'national' identity. The problem in an ethnically divided state such as Canada, of course, is that invocation of France as somehow a balm for the national-identity neuralgia has a tendency to backfire, as happened for instance five years ago when, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Québec, Prime Minister Stephen Harper emphasized that in a very real way, Canada's origins themselves had to be dated to 1608, with Samuel de Champlain deserving recognition as a *Canadian* founding father. This conscription of Champlain (and by extension France) into the service of Canadian identity hit a nerve among some pro-sovereignty elements in Québec, with one Bloc Québécois member of the House of Commons lashing out at the Prime Minister for his "surrealistic rewriting of history."² As these critical remarks by parliamentarian Michel Guimond demonstrate, how or even whether France 'fits' into the saga of Canadian political development can easily lead to controversy. And it is precisely this clash of "entangled nationalisms" over the quarter-century separating the ending of the Second World War

¹ See for a recent example, Lawrence Martin, "As America Unwinds, Canada Rewinds," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 23 July 2013, p. A15, where mention is made of a "new trilateralism," in which Canada's British identity is said to be getting invoked as a means of providing ontological "balance" vis-à-vis the U.S.

² Quoted in Robert Dutrisac and Isabelle Porter, "400e de Québec: Couillard corrige Charest," *Le Devoir* (Montréal), 13 May 2008, p. A1

from 1970 that David Meren addresses in his fascinating new study of that *other* “North Atlantic triangle”³ – the one whose three bases are Canada, Québec, and France.

As Michael Carroll notes in his review of Meren’s *With Friends Like These*, it is uncommon to the point of rarity to find an English Canadian so conversant with historical as well as contemporary political developments appertaining to the French fact in North America as is David Meren. For sure, other scholars, from other disciplines, have taken their own turn at puzzling out how France might be said to have figured in the recent internal and international politics of Canada, but with some very few exceptions, this work has been carried on by francophones, usually from Québec but sometimes from France itself. An important example of such scholarship is the new book by Justin Massie, a Quebecker, which covers from a political science perspective some of the same ground as Meren, doing so, however, within a very different conceptual framework supplied by “strategic culture.”⁴

Carroll does not limit his praise for what he describes as Meren’s “intelligent and thought-provoking” book merely to the author’s linguistic prowess; he also praises his diligence in archival research, which has done so much to advance our understanding of the role played by France in postwar Canadian domestic politics. And while the material and the manner in which it is revealed to the reader can at times, necessarily, become complex to the point of density, Carroll appreciates the overall skill with which Meren tells his story. Most importantly, Carroll agrees with Meren that at the heart of this story are broader forces – political for sure, but also economic and cultural – that far transcend the role of the *dramatis personae* so typically associated with this triangular relationship, none of these latter, of course, being more important than Charles de Gaulle.

Andrew Holman echoes this theme, in noting in his review that one of Meren’s aims has been explicitly to de-emphasize the significance of de Gaulle and “Gaullism,” in effect to “put de Gaulle in his place” (in Meren’s own words). Holman joins Carroll in lavishing praise upon the book, which he calls a “fine example of the new international history, one that knits the global and local in convincing ways and demonstrates how domestic concerns shaped diplomatic positions.” Still, Holman finds that Meren’s tendency to privilege “circumstance over character” leaves something to be desired. Admittedly, personal details concerning de Gaulle are fully on display in Meren’s study – too fully, as far as Holman is concerned – but where, he wonders, are illuminating vignettes relating to some of the other central figures in the triangular dynamics that make up the book’s substance? Where, for instance, can the reader find much biographical richness in Meren’s pages on important players from both the federal government’s side (Marcel Cadieux and

³ One of the most powerful metaphors ever developed in Canadian geopolitical historiography is the “North Atlantic triangle,” so called by a Canadian historian who taught at Columbia University during the era of the Second World War; see John Bartlet Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle: The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1966; orig. pub. Toronto and New Haven: Ryerson and Yale University Press, 1945).

⁴ Justin Massie, *Francosphère: L’importance de la France dans la culture stratégique du Canada* (Québec: Presses de l’Université du Québec, 2013).

Jules Léger, to name just two) and the provincial government's (Paul Gérin-Lajoie and Daniel Johnson)⁵? At the risk of seeming "churlish," Holman also highlights another shortcoming, the absence from the story of the "voices of ordinary people."

Holman, as does Carroll, admires the manner in which Meren contextualizes the discussion of French involvement in Canadian political affairs by emphasizing how the United States, willy-nilly, itself has figured centrally in the Canada-Québec-France triangle. It is Meren's appreciation of the American role in the triangular melodrama that also earns him high marks in Irwin Wall's review. It is far from obvious, at least to this roundtable's guest editor, that Ottawa was even the primary target for de Gaulle in his famous (or, perhaps better, infamous) *cri du balcon* from the Montreal city hall back in the summer of 1967; it could well have been Washington that the French leader primarily had in his rhetorical sights in exclaiming "Vive le Québec libre!" As Wall explains, "[d]e Gaulle deeply resented American interference in French politics, of which there was and had been a great deal before he came to power with his policy of 'indépendance.' But the General had no compunction about interfering in the internal politics of Canada..." It is hard to resist the conclusion that uppermost among de Gaulle's sources of discontent with Ottawa was its "Atlanticist" orientation, which in his view made it a cat's paw of American "hegemony" (even though, as Meren himself shows, Ottawa invoked Atlanticism as a means of *reducing* the American impact on Canadian foreign policy).

Participants:

David Meren is an assistant professor in the Département d'histoire at the Université de Montréal, where he specializes in Canadian international history. In addition to *With Friends Like These: Entangled Nationalisms and the Canada-Quebec-France Triangle, 1944-1970* (UBC Press, 2012), he has written in the *Canadian Historical Review* on decolonization's impact on the Franco-Québécois rapprochement, as well as on cultural exchanges in the Canada-Quebec-France triangle in the *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*. Among his current projects is the co-editing of a collection on race and Canadian international history. He has also recently undertaken a new research project that will explore the entangled histories of Canadian foreign aid and relations between Aboriginal peoples and Canada.

David Haglund is a Professor of Political Studies at Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario) and received his Ph.D. in International Relations in 1978 from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, in Washington, D.C. His research focuses on transatlantic security, and on Canadian and American international security policy. Among his books are

⁵ Cadieux was a prominent diplomat, serving during the latter part of the period covered by Meren as Canada's Undersecretary of State for External Affairs (1964-70); so too was Léger a leading diplomat, who at the time of the events surrounding the de Gaulle visit was Canadian ambassador to France; Gérin-Lajoie was a leading member of the Quebec provincial government headed by Liberal Jean Lesage from 1960 to 1966, most notably as education minister from 1964 to 1966, during which period he enunciated his famous "doctrine" establishing the basis of the province's growing involvement in international affairs; and Johnson was premier of Quebec from 1966 to 1968.

Latin America and the Transformation of U.S. Strategic Thought, 1936-1940 (1984); *Alliance within the Alliance? Franco-German Military Cooperation and the European Pillar of Defense* (1991); *Will NATO Go East? The Debate Over Enlarging the Atlantic Alliance* (1996); and *The North Atlantic Triangle Revisited: Canadian Grand Strategy at Century's End* (2000). He is currently completing a monograph on ethnic diasporas and their impact upon security relations between the United States and Canada.

Michael K. Carroll received his Ph.D. from the University of Toronto and is an Assistant Professor of History in the Department of Humanities at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Canada. He is the author of *Pearson's Peacekeepers: Canada and the United Nations Emergency Force, 1956-1967* (UBC Press, 2009) and is currently editing (with Greg Donaghy) *From Kinshasa to Kandahar: Canadian Diplomacy in Fragile States, 1960-2012*. He is also working on a study of Canada's involvement in Indochina from 1954 to 1973.

Andrew C. Holman is Professor of History and Director of the Canadian Studies Program at Bridgewater State University in Massachusetts, where he teaches courses in Canadian and Quebec history. He earned his PhD from York University (Toronto) in 1995. Among his publications are three books in Canadian social and cultural history (*More of Man* [with Robert Kristofferson, University of Toronto Press, 2013]; *Canada's Game: Hockey and Identity* [McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009] and *A Sense of Their Duty* [McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000]). He is currently completing a book chapter called "Sport Paradiplomacy and the International Image of Quebec" for a collection of essays on the history of Quebec's international personality.

Irwin Wall is Graduate Professor, University of California, Riverside, and Visiting Professor, New York University. He is the author of *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* and *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*. His current work is on the recent French elections.

Everything about French President Charles de Gaulle's trip to Canada in 1967 was designed to provoke a reaction. Instead of flying to Ottawa and starting his visit in the nation's capital, he arrived by ship with his first port of call being Quebec City. Even the name of the ship – the French naval cruiser *Colbert* – was laden with meaning: Jean Baptiste Colbert had been Louis XIV's finance minister who oversaw the colonization of New France in the mid-1600s. So when de Gaulle wanted to give a speech to the adoring crowd gathered in Place Jacques Cartier outside Montreal's city hall, Mayor Jean Drapeau was understandably nervous. Nobody, however, should have been terribly surprised when the General slipped in the Quebec separatists' rallying cry, "*Vive le Québec libre!*" amidst the conclusion of his oratorical bravado.

Yet as David Meren illustrates in his intelligent and thought-provoking study of the Canada-Quebec-France triangle, Franco-Canadian relations transcended the whims of individual statesmen like Charles de Gaulle. Following relations between Canada, Quebec, and France from 1944 to 1970, Meren does an excellent job of tracing the relationship from one of allies to adversaries, and showing that while diplomatic relations ebbed and flowed among Ottawa, Quebec City, and Paris, each advocated policies rooted in their perceived political self-interest.

With Friends Like These is a well-researched book with Meren having delved into various archives in Canada, France, and the United Kingdom. Special note should be made of his use of French language archival sources. While most, if not all, historians of Canada have to at least have a reading ability in French, many Anglophone historians (and I would suspect most) do little more than pay lip service to French documents. There are many reasons for this: the additional time required to work in a language which is not the researcher's native tongue, added costs, accessibility of documentation, the list goes on. But Meren is to be commended for his thorough use of sources in the French National Archives, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Archives of Contemporary History located in Paris, as well as the *Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec*. He has also made good use of the secondary literature and this thorough research has helped to provide a nuanced understanding of a difficult and multifaceted topic.

Relations with France are very often viewed in Canadian history solely vis-à-vis their effect on domestic politics. But by looking beyond the influence of de Gaulle – to do otherwise, Meren posits, “reduces the French leader's *cri du balcon* to little more than a historical footnote” (5) – Meren adds to the historical understanding of international relations by examining not only the political ramifications, but also incorporating the important economic and cultural dimensions of the relationship. He also sets out to look not only at the divisive nature of dealings between Ottawa, Quebec City, and Paris, but also their commonalities.

Meren's study is divided into three parts, with the first section looking at the triangular relations in the immediate post-World War II era up to 1960; the second deals with the

emerging tensions between the actors rising out of the changes which beset Quebec during the Quiet Revolution; and the final chapters deal with the manifestation of these tensions as they played out on the domestic and international stages from 1960-1970. To deal with political, economic, and ethnocultural aspects of the topic, Meren is forced to stray from a traditional chronological approach. While completely understandable in terms of structure, this does lead to a loss of fluidity in some places, which detracts from what is otherwise a very clear and accessible writing style.

Whereas studies of Franco-Canadian diplomatic relations have traditionally focused their attention on the 1960s and beyond, Meren provides an important service by going back to the roots of cooperation which can be found in the waning days of the Second World War. Starting off with the foundational question of Atlanticism, Meren posits that both countries perceived it “as a means to influence and even constrain Washington” (11). For Canada it was yet another form of multilateralism meant to offset American domination, while France saw Atlanticism as a means to regain its influence on the world stage. One of the themes of the book, and a main issue that initially brought Canada and France together, was concern over the preponderance of American power in the cultural and economic spheres. While Meren covers this from the perspective of the Canada-Quebec-France triangle, it would be interesting to examine the American archives and see the lens through which officials in Washington viewed their ‘allies’ motivations and actions.

By the mid-1950s, and especially after the 1956 Suez debacle, Paris embraced a more nationalist approach to foreign policy which led France to challenge the traditional interpretation of Atlanticism, and Canada was increasingly viewed as a satellite or proxy of the United States. In this vein Meren states that “Ottawa strove to act as a linchpin and reconcile France with its allies, in the hope of preserving the transatlantic framework at the heart of Canadian foreign policy” (12). I must admit that the idea of Canadian politicians or diplomats being able to act as a ‘linchpin’ between the United States and France or Britain, or any other nation for that matter, is a somewhat tired notion that speaks more to Canadian affairs than the international realm. With perhaps the odd notable exception, if any of the great powers have ever really wanted to communicate with other nations there has been little need for Canada to facilitate relations. The important point here, however, is that this was a role Canadian policymakers wanted to, and in some cases believed they could, and should, play. Such was Canada’s view of the world.

The murky political relations between Canada, Quebec, and France during the 1960s are generally well understood, though Meren’s cultural interpretations add another dimension of complexity as Quebec City sought to use France’s culture overtures as leverage against Ottawa in an attempt to chart its own constitutional course. For Lester Pearson’s Liberal government in Ottawa, this was an unwelcome attack on national unity. Pearson, and Secretary of State for External Affairs Paul Martin, clung to Atlanticism as a means to ward off the overbearing influence of the United States; a separate Quebec would simply weaken the rest of Canada and pave the way for Canada’s entry as the 51st state of the Union. De Gaulle, however, believed that “the Canadian status quo was already producing the feared enhancement of American geopolitical strength” (141). In his mind, somewhat ironically, an independent Quebec – under French tutelage, of course – would be able to help Canada

fight against further American encroachment. Meren's economic analysis, however, demonstrates that the private sector in France was "rather unenthusiastic" about closer economic ties, in part due to "misgivings over the rise of Quebec separatism" (203). De Gaulle had hoped that economic associations would work in tandem with cultural cooperation, yet French companies were indifferent to political motivations and Michelin, the French tire giant, found it economically advantageous to open a branch plant in Nova Scotia as opposed to Quebec.

De Gaulle's resignation in April 1969 was welcomed in Canada – Jules Léger, the Canadian ambassador in Paris, celebrated with champagne – and there were immediate hopes for a rapprochement between Ottawa and Paris. There was, however, an underlying continuity in French policy towards Canada which is often missed in the de Gaulle-centric examination of events. As Meren points out, the new French President, Georges Pompidou, "hoped for good relations with Ottawa but wanted excellent relations with Quebec" (251). Quebec City was still the focus of France's attention in Canada, though Pompidou was believed to be less bombastic than his predecessor. Changes in leadership in Canada – Robert Bourassa at the Quebec provincial level and Pierre Trudeau at the federal level – also had an effect on triangular relations. Bourassa, a Liberal, was less driven to clash with Ottawa, yet Trudeau took a much harder stance against France's 'two nations' policy and, from time to time, was not afraid to draw public attention to his exasperation with French officials. This very public diplomacy had been abhorred by Pearson and Martin for fear of forging even stronger ties between Paris and Quebec City. Quiet diplomacy, however, had not paid any dividends and Trudeau was never one to blithely accept the status quo.

While Meren effectively provides an 'objective' portrayal of French-Quebecois-Canadian relations, there is a sense that Ottawa was always one step behind Paris, and also behind Quebec City. While Canadian policymakers and diplomats alike were frustrated by French overtures to Quebec, with the exception of increased foreign aid to francophone countries in Africa, very few productive and proactive policies were put on the table by the Canadian government. This was not only an international issue, but rather at its very core was a domestic issue. According to Meren, Marcel Cadieux, the Undersecretary of State for External Affairs from 1964-1970, and one of the few francophones with any semblance of stature within the federal civil service at the time, lamented that "the reason Paris had succeeded was that Canada had not found the means, a century after Confederation, to be fair to its francophone population" (230). And until this situation is resolved, there will continue to be problems.

With Friends Like These is undoubtedly an impressive addition to the academic scholarship surrounding the complex relationship between Canada, Quebec, and France. Meren has broadened the discourse by undertaking a comprehensive examination of economic and cultural factors, in addition to the traditional political intrigue. While the density of the issues may at time seem daunting, Meren's prose provides an engaging edge to the material, which makes this book an incredibly useful source for academics and students alike.

During a casual chat with a staffer from the Quebec Delegation in Boston at an on-campus event at Bridgewater State this past spring, I mentioned that I had just finished reading Université de Montréal professor David Meren's new book, *With Friends Like These*. The book explained to me, I told her, how Quebec's international "personality" came into being in the 1960s (and by extension, how jobs like hers came to exist). She was curious about Meren's perspective (and the fact that the book was published in English), but had an intriguing reaction when told of Meren's idea that France had played such a critical role in the development of a formal Quebec presence outside of Canada. "Well yes," she said. "But all that is past now." That conversation, though lighthearted and fleeting, spoke volumes. In the twenty-first century, Quebec's international presence is, to many Québécois, so much an accepted and established fact that it is hard to conceive today that establishing an external personality was ever so controversial, or that it remains dimly viewed outside of Quebec. Since the mid-1960s, the Canadian province of Quebec, recognized in 2006 by the Canadian Parliament as a 'nation within a united Canada,' has established 28 foreign offices and has become signatory (or co-signatory) to more than 700 international agreements.¹ At the same time, to much of the rest of Canada, Quebec's foreign mission seemed and seems needless and unwanted, when Canadian embassies appear capable of representing Quebec's (and all Canadians') interests abroad. Today, the international presence of Quebec is symptomatic of trends afoot in the international system in the Age of Globalization. Quebec is among a range of sub-state (and non-state) actors that now regularly assert (in often constitutionally limited ways) a sovereign presence. And yet, Quebec's story - how it got to that stage - is a unique one that connects the domestic and foreign political aspirations of three nations. In *With Friends Like These*, Meren ably recounts this complex narrative, from the end of World War II until about 1970, when Quebec, with French support, established an uneasy, grudging *modus vivendi* with Canada's federal government to act internationally.

This book starts with and hinges on one central event: the 1967 visit of French President and iconoclast Charles de Gaulle to Montreal and, specifically, his '*cri du balcon*': an unanticipated speech from the balcony of Montreal's City Hall to assembled *Montréalais* and Expo '67 visitors in which he championed the blood ties of Frenchmen at home and abroad and openly supported the province's independence movement with the phrase 'Vive le Québec libre.' The remainder of *With Friends Like These* is structured around its explication; Meren seeks to "put de Gaulle in his place" (5). What happened in Montreal, he argues, had a very rich prologue; it was, per Fernand Braudel, an *événement* never fully comprehensible without an understanding of its *conjoncture*. Among English-Canadian historians, de Gaulle's speech perplexes. The textbook narrative marks it as an embarrassing and unwelcome bit of bad manners from a leader whose best years had

¹ Ministère des Relations internationales, de la Francophonie et du Commerce extérieur (MRIFCE) website. See "Agreements and Commitments" <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/ententes-et-engagements/presentation> and "United States" <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/relations-du-quebec/ameriques/etats-unis/portrait>. Accessed 17 June 2013.

passed. Meren's book put this event centre stage and corrects that narrative. Not an 'odd bit' at all, the *cri du balcon* was the outcome of a generation of triangular tensions among three national entities and three visions of nationalism.

Historians like to count in threes, and Meren is no exception. *With Friends Like These* has three chronologically-based parts. Part One traces, in turn, the geopolitical, economic and cultural ties that developed between Canada and France, and France and Quebec, in the fifteen years following the end of World War II. These years were marked by political and economic divergence between the first pairing, and a cultural warming between the latter. As France rejected post-war 'Atlanticism' (out of fear of American and Anglo-domination in NATO, and in economics), Canada continued to embrace it as a way of expressing its newly won sovereignty. At the same time, cultural contacts between France and Quebec increased. By contrast, Canada was reluctant to pursue much in the way of cultural diplomacy (limited, as it was, by a constitution that assigned 'culture' to provincial jurisdiction). By 1960, French interests in Canada focused increasingly on Quebec alone: a bifurcated, 'two-nations' policy was in the offing, and French-speaking Quebec (not Canada) became France's preferred partner.

Part Two contains the meat of Meren's argument and the novelty of his research. Between 1960 and de Gaulle's speech, relations in the Canada-France-Quebec 'triangle' became tense and tangled. As Quebec's Quiet Revolution ushered in new secularism and statist policies designed to modernize the province's economy and social welfare and open up opportunity for Québécois, France's contacts with Quebec helped inspire leading Québécois to fight for an international personality for the province. Though Quebec had opened (and later closed) offices abroad in earlier eras, when it established its *Maison du Québec* in Paris in 1961, a new age of permanent foreign missions began. The symbolism of an office abroad, and French attention, pushed Quebec leaders to argue for more. By 1965, cabinet minister Paul Gérin-Lajoie argued publicly that Quebec had the right to sign international agreements in its own name, in areas within the jurisdiction (but especially education and 'culture') accorded it by the Canadian constitution. Though the government of Canada opposed this idea vehemently, Quebec successfully established that right in the negotiations that led in 1967 to the establishment of the Francophonie, an international body of French-speaking nations (in which Quebec, Canada, and the bilingual Canadian province of New Brunswick currently hold membership). In the same year that de Gaulle uttered his *cri du balcon*, Quebec made the unsubtle statement of establishing its own Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs. As Meren shows, all of these events brought about an era of acute crisis in Canada-Quebec-France relations. And de Gaulle's incendiary speech both typified and inflamed the conundrum. The responses were ambivalent, "complicated" (119). The Government of Canada was outraged at the intrusion, quickly uninvited the French President to a planned Ottawa visit, and had him ushered to the Montreal airport. Quebec government leaders were troubled by the brashness of de Gaulle's intervention, knowing that while self-determination was supportable in principle, a call for full-on independence in 1967 was embarrassingly premature. Perhaps most perplexed were the Gaullist diplomats and de Gaulle himself, who had (despite indications to the contrary from Quebec interlocutors) badly misread the sentiments of the Quebec government and Québécois themselves.

Part Three of this book examines the aftermath of de Gaulle's visit and the consequences of the era of crisis, 1967-70. Meren asks: did de Gaulle's gambit work? To distill one hundred pages of text into two words: sort of. In the economic realm, connections between France and Quebec (and France and Canada) remained very modest indeed. But in the realm of culture, France and Quebec and France and Canada signed cultural accords that strengthened existing ties. Still, the ambivalence remained. Most Quebec politicians feared an overtight embrace from France; even the *Mouvement souveraineté-association* (later *Parti Québécois* [PQ]), which got its start in 1967, rejected French 'help' and feared the spectre of outside meddling in what was supposed to be self-determination. And despite all this, a significant attitudinal change had indeed been brought about. Even though Canada could never accede to Quebec's outright claim to a limited foreign personality, it could do little to prevent Quebec's mid-1960s educational and cultural ententes with France. Canada's exclusive federal prerogative in foreign affairs was 'illusory' (227); Quebec's international personality a *fait accompli*. "[T]he genie that de Gaulle had released could not be put back into the bottle" (272).

In the aftermath of 1967 came important leadership changes: de Gaulle retired in 1969, replaced by Georges Pompidou who, though Gaullist, could never be de Gaulle. In Canada, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau rose to power in 1968 and, in 1970, Robert Bourassa became the new Quebec premier. However, the changing leadership signaled no new posture change; new leaders inherited their positions. By the early 1970s, the desire for a decline in tensions and the passage of time helped 'normalize' relations; an uneasy truce took hold.

With Friends Like These is a fine example of the new international history, one that knits the global and local in convincing ways and demonstrates how domestic concerns shaped diplomatic positions. Though the book only rarely engages overtly the secondary literature on this subject, it is nonetheless impressively researched and based on sources found in the national archives of each of the three points of the triangle: Canada, France, and Quebec. The book is an ambitious one with a large scope. Meren's subject is really three topics in one, and though Quebec is at the centre of this story, he balances his treatment of the three poles commendably. The writing is dense but precise and carefully worded.

With Friends Like These does so many things well that it seems a bit churlish to express how Meren might have done more in this book, or pitched it differently. Authors have to make choices. One of those that Meren makes is to favour circumstance over character. This book is, at heart, about diplomatic positions or intersecting postures and the changing geometry of those postures. And yet, one might argue, positions are made and postures are taken by real people. Perhaps because the scope of this subject is so broad, Meren cannot dwell in much depth on personalities. Still, one wishes to read more about the people who formulated policy, reacted to policies of other national entities, and who carried these messages of those policies abroad. The exception is, of course, de Gaulle, about whom we learn quite enough. More detail about the lives and intellects of those who made policy and expressed it to others (Ottawa's Marcel Cadieux and Jules Léger, and Quebec's Gérin-Lajoie and Daniel Johnson, for example) would help us bring to life the diplomatic postures they

helped create. One wonders, too, about the identities and roles of both Canada's and Quebec's fledgling diplomatic corps in France; were there many local officers who "crossed over," serving Canada, then Quebec, or vice versa? Moreover, *With Friends Like These* steers away from the popular effects of diplomacy in favour of the formal brief. Missing here are the voices of ordinary people, the on-the-ground responses to both de Gaulle's signature speech and the creeping closeness of France and Quebec in the 1960s. What did Québécois make of the pageantry of de Gaulle's elaborate 1967 tour? And how did Canadians outside of Quebec react? Finally, how, if they even knew of the event, did Frenchmen regard it? Much recent writing in new diplomatic history tells us that the 'out-of-doors' matters in the late-twentieth century because the legitimacy of foreign policy depends on it.

Meren's decision to employ a chronological structure works well, though it necessitates some repetition of themes and events. Americanization looms perennially throughout and we see economy, culture and geopolitics reappear in each part. The content and context of de Gaulle's *cri du balcon* is introduced and explained in the book's Introduction, but an examination of its effects and consequences does not appear until Chapter 5. Another of Meren's choices was to end his analysis with the emergence of the uneasy truce in the 1970s. That periodization is logical, of course, but this story does not end here, and one hopes that the author will, in his next monograph, pick up from where he has left off. How Quebec's newly-won international personality was affected by the increasingly shrill animosity of Quebec's call for constitutional revision in the 1970s and 80s, the election of René Lévesque's PQ in 1976, and the narrow failure of the 1980 Referendum demands serious study. That subject would connect the era that Meren describes so well and Quebec's robust foreign presence today, in the age of Quebec's continued quest for national affirmation and the return to office in September 2012 of a new version of the PQ. In that story, beyond the 1960s, France recedes from a catalytic role. "All that is past now," as my friend from Boston's Quebec Delegation said, but France's place in the province's coming of age internationally has lasting resonance and remains an important chapter in both Canadian history and the history of international relations.

When French President Charles de Gaulle pronounced the heavily coded words, “Vive le Québec libre,” from the balcony of the Quebec City Hotel de Ville in July 1967, many of his admirers thought he had gone beyond anything previously regarded as acceptable. David Meren, in this fascinating study of de Gaulle and Quebec, notes the reaction in France as being a mixture of “incredulity, bemusement, and hostility” (119). Some analysts, indeed, thought the General was lapsing into dementia, then denoted as senility. Gaullist foreign policy until 1967 had caused fury in Washington, but won him a grudging admiration from many critics of the cold war bi-polarization that characterized the era. Regarded as retrograde in Washington for his belief that Communism would eventually be overcome by traditional forces of nationalism, in retrospect he has come to seem visionary, anticipating the collapse of the Soviet bloc that occurred a scant twenty years after he left power.

De Gaulle had withdrawn France from NATO’s integrated command, endowed France with an independent nuclear capability, and launched an independent European policy of détente with the USSR that was to be continued by Federal Republic of Germany Chancellor Willy Brandt in the 1970s and that became a staple of the European system until 1989. France had been excoriated for its last-ditch defense of colonialism during the Algerian war, but de Gaulle had managed to make of his country instead a leader of the third world, and an outspoken critic of American policy in Vietnam. Even his sudden abandonment of France’s one-time ally, Israel, during the June 1967 war appeared justified to many, but the General had raised suspicion by his subsequent characterization of the Jews as an “elite people, sure of themselves, and domineering,”¹ thus blemishing a distinguished career up to that point had been remarkably free of any hint or suspicion of anti-Semitism. By following that turnabout with blatant and ill-considered interference in the internal affairs of an ally and Francophile nation, Canada, which prided itself in its Anglo-French bi-culturalism, de Gaulle seemed to have gone off his rocker with an act that came from nowhere.

Meren’s important contribution is to show us that even if one regards the act as ill-considered, it did not come from nowhere. On the contrary, it was a culmination of growing collisions of neo-nationalist policies that increasingly characterized the Canada-Quebec “triangle” during the postwar era. Meren reminds us that men and women still lived (and live) in a world in which nationalism was the ultimate universally shared value. France under de Gaulle was experiencing a rebirth of nationalism, fueled by a self-perception of new independence from an over-arching American hegemony. There was some jealousy of that independence from both Canada and Quebec; Anglo Canada, with its Commonwealth ties, sought a distinctive identity from its neighbor to the south that otherwise threatened to swallow it up, and it clung to its French component as a crucial

¹ Jonathan Fenby, *General Charles de Gaulle and the France He Saved* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2012), 554.

element of a bi-cultural nation. But Quebec in the 1960s embarked on what has since come to be seen as a “Quiet Revolution” of its own as it sought to find a distinctive model of modernization that was not to be confused with Americanization and that further differentiated it from Anglo-Canada as defender of a ‘Fait Français,’ a French ‘fact’ or presence in North America. In its new cultural awakening Quebec looked naturally to France for sustenance.

Canada is a federal system and its provinces enjoy a considerable measure of autonomy, in particular control over their systems of education. Quebec had been laggard in Canada, mired in a conservative Catholicism that controlled its schools and it had evinced sympathy for the Vichy regime in France even as its soldiers fought with their fellow Anglo-Canadians alongside the allies in the Second World War. There was little regard in Quebec for the France of the Fourth Republic and its secular, atheist political parties during the 1950s, but by the time of the Quiet Revolution the province had built its own education system and became conscious of the vibrant intellectual and cultural life taking place across the Atlantic. It helped, too, that France had a vibrant left-Christian intellectual milieu and a popular Christian-Democratic party after the war. Meren also points out that it was really in the postwar that governments for the first time became involved in culture, and the Quebec government started on this process as the Canadian government was first beginning its own awkward first steps in this regard. Who was to be responsible for the flourishing of French-Canadian culture, Ottawa or Quebec City? And if it was to be Quebec City, what of the French in the rest of Canada, a significant minority of whom lived in New Brunswick while pockets existed in Ontario and even Manitoba? These questions seem never to have arisen in the Canadian context before, and immediately became a point of contention between Quebec and Canada in so far as French culture was concerned. Where did culture fit into the complexity of Canadian provincial-federal relations? For non-Canadians Meren would have done well here to interject some greater summary of the Canadian system and federal-provincial relations for his Anglophone readers, and he might still want to consider doing so for an eventual French translation if it is not yet in the works.

France was historically concerned with the defense of its language (*Parlez-vous Franais?*) and the spread and flourishing (*épanouissement*) of its culture around the world, to which it allocated considerable resources. Canada, in contrast, had done little in that regard, and nothing as far as Quebec culture was concerned. The sixties were also the era of the end of colonization and the transformation of the French empire into an independent community of nations, united by the French education and culture of their elites who subscribed to the growing phenomenon known as the *Francophonie*. As the community was organized, the nationalist president de Gaulle looked to Quebec, which in his eyes was not at all American, nor even simply Francophone, but rather authentically French. He also seems to have assumed that Quebec would naturally seek independence from Canada, and to have conceived almost instinctively the French role to be to assist it in that evolution.

De Gaulle was also a mischief-maker with regard to American hegemony, and he deeply resented the Canadian federal government’s foreign policy of Atlanticism and faithfulness to the NATO alliance as it existed. It did not help French-Canadian relations either that de

Gaulle was resolved to build his *force de frappe*, or independent nuclear deterrent while Canada aligned itself with American anti-proliferation policies, to the point of refusing to sell France uranium. That France withdrew from NATO's integrated command was one thing, but that it expelled NATO troops and bases from its soil was another, and as the Canadian contingent prepared to leave France in 1965 Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson pointedly asked whether Canada should take with it its 100,000 war dead buried in France as well. Economically France and Canada were divided further; Canada, like the United States, feared that French protectionism would extend to all Europe as the continent fell under the sway of France in the European Community then coming into being and it, like England and the United States, strongly preferred a free-trade association in Europe including the British, with low tariffs that allowed maximum trade with the Americas to the tightly-knit European Economic Community. Canada's natural markets were in North America, as were, of course, Quebec's, a point that seems to have escaped the French as they wrote off Canada as a puppet of Washington and tried to pry Quebec away from it.

The merit of Meren's book is to show just how deeply ingrained this Gaullist policy to achieve an independent Quebec became in the 1960s and how it fit into the Gaullist challenge to American hegemony generally. Meren refrains, however, from pointing out just how pointless the policy was as well. What could the General hope to achieve by it? What good was it to France? Does Quebec, as part of Canada, remain in any way inhibited from participating in Francophonie or enjoying cultural relations with France? De Gaulle deeply resented American interference in French politics, of which there was and had been a great deal before he came to power with his policy of '*indépendance*.' But the General had no compunction about interfering in the internal politics of Canada, which paradoxically did not want to block what Quebec was doing in the cultural sphere, but rather to assert its own desire, indeed right and obligation, to be partner with Quebec in the enterprise. Quebec, in the throes of its own neo-nationalism, rejected Ottawa's claim, allowing France to become the arbiter between them. It was the peculiar ingenuity of de Gaulle's mischief-making to privilege Quebec's relations with France and to isolate Ottawa, thus in effect making himself the arbiter of Canada's internal affairs.

It is to Ottawa's credit that it adopted the same policy as Washington in the face of de Gaulle's provocations. Recognizing de Gaulle's advanced age, Pearson was wise enough to understand that the General would not long continue in power in France. There were also enough signals from de Gaulle's own administration that his Quebec policy was a point of internal dissension, that it represented de Gaulle alone, and that unlike his broader policy of independence from the U.S., or his turn on the Israel-Arab question, it was unlikely to survive him. In the event, despite his overt call for Quebec independence, which he repeated but months after the famous *cri du balcon*, and the undignified effort of France and Quebec to keep Ottawa out of the organization of the *Francophonie*, (which was frustrated by the statesmanship of Francophone African leaders who had no desire to undermine their own relations with Canada), de Gaulle's policy was of brief duration. In May 1968 his effort at independence collapsed with the French economy as a consequence of the social explosion of workers and students who nearly toppled him with their unprecedented protests, and in August of the same year his efforts at détente suffered a

serious setback when the Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia. By the following spring de Gaulle had resigned and a year later he was dead.

What of de Gaulle's influence on the internal evolution of Canada? It is of course impossible to judge what would have happened without the *cri du balcon*, but the saga of the vain efforts of the *Parti Québécois* to achieve independence amid its troubled relations with Canadian federal authorities in Ottawa is a post-de Gaulle history and one suspects that it would have turned out as it has anyway. But it is legitimate in this context to ask, I think, just how important or world-shaking the question of Quebec really is, or was for that matter outside Canada, or even inside it. Unlike Algeria, to which it was compared at the time, there was never a question of an epic struggle for independence on the part of Quebec or against Quebec secession on the part of Anglophone Canada; thus far the people of Quebec have defeated independence in two referenda, and the recent return of the PQ to power, given its minority status, appears unlikely to lead to a third. There is not sufficient desire for independence in Quebec or sentiment against it in Anglophile Canada for its eventuality, should it one day occur, to become the source of violent conflict. Most of the provinces more likely would react with a shrug and a good riddance.

Meren refers to the story he tells with the metaphor of a triangle. But was it really that? His narrative is rather the history of two states and a province in a quest for cultural autonomy that Ottawa was neither able nor desirous to prevent even as it tried to assert some federal authority over the process. What would nationhood mean for Quebec? It has cultural autonomy and total freedom in terms of cultural relations with France. It has no need of an army, but it has need of Canada's internal market, not to mention that of the United States. The attempt to privilege economic relations with France foundered on the divergent economies of Canada including Quebec and France; as Meren aptly points out, neither Canada, Quebec nor France called into question the system of liberal capitalism and the globalization it entails. One of his most telling points is that French private investors were not particularly attracted by the Quebec economy, and when they were it was because Quebec could be a perch from which to gain entry to the North American market, a situation that would be imperiled if Quebec separatism prevailed. In fact direct investment in Quebec from France failed in the case of Renault, while Michelin chose to establish its new Canadian facilities in Ontario and Pechiney by-passed the Canadian market altogether to implant itself in the United States.

In the event, Quebec's Quiet Revolution assisted in the coming of Trudeau to power, and it fell to him to try to forge a new identity for a bi-cultural Canada. He succeeded, paradoxically, more for Anglo Canada than French Canada, and almost fifty years later Canada's Quebec problem is not resolved. But need it be? Are historical questions ever really "answered," or solved? All that the historian can do Meren has done with aplomb: put the issue in clarifying historical perspective.

Author's Response by David Meren, Université de Montréal

I wish to thank Thomas Maddux and H-Diplo for organizing this round table. It is a privilege to have had my book selected for review and to exchange ideas with four esteemed colleagues. I am especially appreciative of H-Diplo's efforts to encourage a diversity of discussion that has provided a new forum for Canadian international history; this is a crucial contribution to the vitality of international history in Canada, and offers an opportunity for those researchers interested in Canada-related subjects to participate in conversations regarding our discipline. I also express my gratitude to my four colleagues for their attentive reading of *With Friends Like These*, and for their gracious comments and constructive critiques that are the foundation for what has been a stimulating conversation about my book, Canadian international history, and its situation in broader intellectual currents.

Andrew Holman opens his review with a picturesque anecdote about encountering a Quebec civil servant who, upon being told of my exploring France's contribution to the development of an official Quebec presence on the world stage, claimed "all that is past now." I was immediately reminded of William Faulkner's oft-quoted chestnut that "the past is never dead. It's not even past." Although it is certainly true that the triangular tensions that marked Franco-Canadian relations in the latter half of the 1960s have dissipated, their legacy endures, perhaps most obviously in Quebec's array of international relations in both the governmental and non-governmental spheres. The controversy surrounding French president Nicolas Sarkozy's visit to Quebec City in 2008, when he appeared to reject the Gaullist legacy and pronounce in favour of Canadian unity, demonstrated how French attitudes regarding the question of Quebec's political future retain their potential to stoke controversy.¹ Finally, a central theme of my book, namely, the acceleration of globalization and its impact on local identities, remains more salient than ever, as demonstrated by the controversy that erupted this summer over the Quebec government's plans to enact a charter of 'Quebec values' that would reportedly ban the wearing of religious symbols in the civil service along with public institutions such as daycares, schools, and hospitals.²

All the reviewers have noted how I wished to put Charles de Gaulle "in his place" (5), that is, to situate his *cri du balcon* and the triangular tensions preceding it into their broader historical moment. This was crucial to moving beyond what I term the 'de Gaulle-centric' analysis that has marked the historiography; the preoccupation with France's larger-than-life President had contributed to an overemphasis on the geopolitical and political

¹ Denis Lessard, *La Presse*, 18 October 2008, "Canada uni: les souverainistes commentent les propos de Sarkozy"; Rhéal Séguin and Les Perreux, *The Globe and Mail*, 18 October 2008, "Parizeau Slams Sarkozy on Sovereignty".

² *The Globe and Mail*, 22 August 2013, "Quebec confirms controversial minorities bill coming", <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/quebec-confirms-controversial-minorities-bill-coming/article13931475/#dashboard/follows/>

dimension of events, and helped fuel narratives that were associated with both sides of the enduring debate over Quebec sovereignty.

To move beyond this de Gaulle-centric approach and demonstrate the significance of the triangular tensions, it was necessary to widen the scope of exploration in a way that, though acknowledging de Gaulle's role, situated the triangular dynamic in which he operated into a larger analytic framework. Most immediately, this dictated a more thorough engagement with the sources at all three points of the triangle, notably the French-language ones. I'm appreciative that Michael Carroll draws attention to this strength of *With Friends Like These*, but I agree with the message implicit in his praise, namely, that it is regrettable that this should be so exceptional and that more of my fellow Canadian historians – certainly anglophone, but also francophone – do not more readily cross what is often their most immediate linguistic and cultural frontier. Like their counterparts in the United States and elsewhere, Canada's international historians need to learn languages and engage with other cultures in order to produce more comprehensive and nuanced accounts. Indeed, in exploring the triangular tensions, I was determined to avoid reproducing a catalogue of slights, or limit discussion to what divided Canada, Quebec, and France; rather, my aim was to demonstrate what they shared in common. By doing so, I demonstrate that the tensions were by no means idiosyncratic; to the contrary, they are part of larger international and transnational narratives.

Linguistic and cultural considerations were also linked to my objective to promote the new diplomatic history in Canada and offer a Canadian contribution to this intellectual current. Exploring the triangle in a manner consistent with the transnational turn, I have placed 'culture' at the centre of the narrative, not just in terms of a clash of diplomatic cultures, but the way in which cultural affairs and identity formation were key to events, including cultural nationalist reactions to a U.S.-dominated globalization. In this sense, elements in Quebec certainly looked to France for "sustenance", as Irwin Wall notes, to help reinforce the province's French cultural heritage; but, in keeping with the nationalist affirmation that marked Quebec's Quiet Revolution, such elements also saw in France a prospective *partner* for a Quebec being promoted as the tangible political expression of a North American francophone nation. Conversely, elements in France projected onto Quebec images ranging from a North American Algeria, to a metaphor for France facing American hegemony, and thus perceived Quebec as at once a dependent and a partner. Above all, however, Quebec came to be viewed in certain quarters as a unique opportunity for France to use its cultural influence to compensate for its diminished international stature.

Cultural considerations and the effort to place the Canada-Quebec-France triangle into the history of globalization are intertwined with the economic component of my analysis, notably the links between modernization and francophone economic empowerment. Carroll and Wall both note the decidedly mixed record of attempts to fundamentally alter the economic dynamic in the triangle. The book thus draws attention to the tensions that flowed from the acceleration of globalization in the Keynesian era, a period in which *national* governments and managing *national* economies were accorded high priority. On the one hand, my narrative underscores how governments constructed – actively and

accidentally – the liberal capitalist variant of globalization; on the other, it suggests the limited efficacy of nationalist responses to this phenomenon.

The more inclusive methodology employed in *With Friends Like These* yields, I believe, a more comprehensive account of the Canada-Quebec-France triangle. Carroll is correct when he states that my book explores how the three points of the triangle pursued policies “rooted in their perceived political self-interest,” but my aim has been to highlight the cultural and economic dimensions of this self-interest and its construction, as well as the ways in which the identity preoccupations of self-appointed nationalist elites influenced such constructions. Situating the triangle into the broader currents of global history also draws attention to the fact that Ottawa had in fact a very narrow margin of manoeuvre in the face of the Franco-Québécois challenge to its authority. Even Pierre Trudeau, who attempted to pursue a more assertive response after becoming Canada’s Prime Minister, saw his government’s efforts frustrated.

The scope of the challenge that Canada’s federal authorities encountered leads me to quibble respectfully with Wall’s dismissal of Gaullist encouragement of an independent Quebec as “pointless.” One can take issue with de Gaulle’s intervention and its efficacy, and I certainly explore the shortcomings of this aspect of French action (119-122; 127), but to dismiss it as pointless runs the risk of falling into a de Gaulle-centric analysis, since it reduces the analysis to one aspect of the Gaullists’ Quebec policy, and indeed, one moment in time (i.e. “Vive le Québec libre!”). Moreover, too hasty a dismissal threatens to simply reproduce the hostility, even derisiveness, that has marked anglophone accounts and obscured the potential insight to be gleaned from the Canada-Quebec-France triangle. Some nuance is thus required; one can argue (and certainly some French and Canadian actors did) that Gaullist support for Quebec independence failed to recognize that a collapse of the Canadian federation would ultimately benefit the United States. However, the apparent growth of Canada’s ‘continentalist’ orientation, which was evident in a deepening Canada-U.S. relationship, was taken as proof by elements in Paris (de Gaulle included) that the status quo was already bringing about the feared enhancement of American strength. Such an assessment provided all of the justification required for a French intervention on behalf of the cause of Quebec independence. For a France challenging the diverse manifestations of American power, an independent Quebec (in some form of equal association with a truncated Canada) would help the ‘Canadas’ retain their autonomy from the United States, and thus preserve them as a useful ally that could act as a counterweight on the North American continent. Moreover, for a France coming to grips with decolonization, an autonomous Quebec participation in the Francophonie would help Paris use cultural power to retain its international stature and maintain a presence in Africa, not least by providing a cover against charges of neo-imperialism by virtue of a Francophonie membership that extended beyond the France-Africa binary. If Quebec, “as part of Canada” is today not “in any way inhibited from participating in Francophonie or enjoying cultural relations with France,” it is due in part to Ottawa having been obliged to adapt – actively or tacitly – to pressures exerted by the Paris-Quebec City axis, and these pressures included the spectre of independence.

Wall also gently questions the appropriateness of the metaphor of a triangle, claiming that the tale I tell is rather that of “two states and a province in a quest for cultural autonomy.” I willingly concede that the triangle I explore was not equilateral in terms of the status of the governments involved, but I hasten to add that nor was it equilateral in other areas; for example, when it came to questions of cultural cooperation, francophone solidarity, and Quebec’s participation in the Francophonie, Ottawa found itself in the inferior position. Ultimately, the metaphor of the triangle is key to understanding the confluence of three nationalisms responding to the realities of American superpower in the post-1945 period and the acceleration of globalization. It is also crucial to addressing the shortcomings of a historiography that, consistent with the heavily politicized nature of the subject matter, has too often tended to focus on only one of the Ottawa-Paris and Paris-Quebec City axes.

As Andrew Holman generously recognizes, my methodology entailed some difficult choices regarding material, and I understand his wish to have read a bit more about the cast of characters involved. To be sure, *With Friends Like These* delves into the backgrounds and views of a number of key personalities, but my concern to avoid the trap of ‘great man’ history, along with my concern to engage with the social and cultural dimensions of the story and place the Canada-Quebec-France triangle into its structural context, meant that the role of individuals had to be balanced against examining other factors that are key to realizing a more expansive, more inclusive international history. It flows from this that, although I make a point of extending my analysis beyond governmental and official circles, I agree with Holman’s observation that my book tends to give pride of place to the voices of various elites rather than “ordinary people” and “on-the-ground responses.” There is thus more to be explored here, not least the attitudes and experiences of those who participated in the various cultural exchanges that occurred in the triangle. Holman notes that I engage overtly with the secondary literature in a sparing fashion; my engagement is certainly more implicit and indirect, as I believe that this produces a more valuable historiographical contribution than getting bogged down in the minutiae of events and thereby reinforcing the orthodox narrative (not to mention the self-interested memoirs upon which so much of this narrative has been based).

Carroll suggests that “it would be interesting to examine the American archives and see the lens through which officials in Washington viewed their ‘allies’ motivations and actions.” There is certainly work that could be done in this regard, but one of my guiding preoccupations while writing my book was to realize the somewhat contradictory goals of, on the one hand, situating the components of the Canada-Quebec-France triangle into the broader currents of international history, while on the other, understanding them in their own right. In other words, the goal was to balance off the global and the local. This preoccupation informed my decision to ‘provincialize’ the United States. There is of course a voluminous literature on Franco-American relations, and more broadly, relations between France and the Anglo-Americans, but their *problématiques* are distinct, and my concern was to avoid relegating the triangular tensions to a simple footnote of this literature. I also wanted to avoid making Washington too central a point of reference, as this would reify the power dynamics to which the actors I examine were reacting and were seeking to alter. This is by no means to say that the United States is not present throughout the book; to the contrary, I make clear that the origins and evolution of the triangular

tensions are to be found in the confluence of three nationalisms that were each in their own way contending with American superpower and the acceleration of globalization linked to this. As more than one person has observed, my book may be said to explore a *quadrilateral* dynamic. Ultimately, however, I felt that the book's historiographical value was to be found in an exploration of events, dynamics, and perspectives from, if not the periphery of the American empire, then at least some distance from its centre, or what may usefully be termed a western 'middle ground' in the late-twentieth-century international system.

It is such an approach that offers me a way to respond to Wall's question, flowing from his assessment of de Gaulle's impact on Canada's evolution since 1967, of "just how important or world-shaking the question of Quebec really is, or was for that matter outside of Canada, or even inside it?" Such a question contains in it the risk of reifying established power structures – geopolitical and intellectual – that privilege the international system's principal power(s) and suggests that events are most usefully assessed from the perspective of its so-called centre. Certainly the triangular tensions were important, indeed world-shaking, to those directly involved in and affected by them; beyond facilitating a distinct Quebec international action, the tensions, not least de Gaulle's *cri du balcon*, reflected, contributed to, and exacerbated an often-rancorous debate that has dominated the political life of Canadians and Quebecers since the 1960s. It is no accident, for example, that Canadian commentators looked askance on Quebec Premier Pauline Marois' 2012 encounter with Scotland's nationalist First Minister, Alex Salmond.

This impact – immediate and enduring – underscores how the Canada-Quebec-France triangle was in fact at the centre of debates marking international relations in the quarter-century after 1945. Beyond the challenges of an international order dominated by the superpowers, events in the triangle were a barometer and a consequence of the acceleration of liberal capitalist globalization, with its implications for sovereignty, identities, and the efficacy – and relevance – of the nation-state, as well as the related transformative impact of 'low politics' that saw sub-state entities such as Quebec seeking to act on the world stage. All of this appeared more relevant than ever as I went about researching and writing what became *With Friends Like These* in a decade in which debate swirled over the implications of globalization and American power in the aftermath of 9/11, a renewed Franco-American estrangement (and strains in the Canada-U.S. relationship) at the time of the war in Iraq, talk of (and indeed, calls for) American imperium, as well as heightened anti-Americanism. I hope that my book – as any work of history should – offers insight into our present through its efforts to better understand the past it explores. I once again express my appreciation to H-Diplo for bringing my book to the attention of our community, and extend my thanks to the reviewers for their constructive and stimulating engagement with its ideas and arguments.

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